

**Amendments to the Claims**

**The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.**

1. (Currently amended) A friction assembly for a brake, **the friction assembly** comprising:
  - a brake pad having:
    - a friction material for producing friction when the brake is in use; and
    - a backing plate having a friction supporting surface for supporting the friction material and a back surface opposite to the friction supporting surface, the back surface having a first coupler member; and
    - a noise damping shim having a first surface for engaging with the back surface of the backing plate, and a second surface for receiving a compression force when the brake is in use, the first surface having a second coupler member for engaging with the first coupler member provided on the back surface of the backing plate so as to couple the noise damping shim with the backing plate.
2. (Currently amended) The friction assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein:
  - the first coupler member has a stem; and
  - the second coupler member has a rim defining a hole for accepting the stem of the first coupler member.
3. (Currently amended) The friction assembly as claimed in claim 2, wherein:
  - the first coupler member further has a recess surrounding the stem; and
  - the rim of the second coupler member protrudes from the first surface of the noise damping shim towards the backing plate such that the rim of the second coupler member is accepted by the recess of the first coupler member while the hole of the second coupler member accepts the stem of the first coupler member.

4. (Currently amended) The friction system as claimed in claim 3, wherein:

the rim of the second coupler member defines the hole having a larger section and a smaller section, the smaller section is defined closer to the backing plate than the larger section; and

the stem of the first coupler member has an enlarged section, the enlarged section having a larger cross section adjacent to ~~the~~ a distal end such that the enlarged section of the stem of the first coupling member mates with the larger section of the hole of the second coupler member to prevent disengagement of the shim from the backing plate.

5. (Currently amended) The friction system as claimed in claim 4, wherein the stem of the first coupler member is deformed to ~~have~~ produce the enlarged section.

6. (Currently amended) The friction system as claimed in claim 4, wherein the enlarged section of the stem of the first coupler member is pre-formed on the stem.

7. (Currently amended) The friction system as claimed in claim 2, wherein the height of the stem of the first coupler member is about 0.07 to 0.09 inches (about 2.24 to 3.98 mm), and the height of the rim of the second coupler member is about 0.04 to 0.07 inches (about 1.02 to 1.78 mm).

8. (Currently amended) The friction system as claimed in claim 2, wherein the diameter of the stem of the first coupler member is about 0.095 to 0.105 inches (about 2.41 to 2.67 mm), and the diameter of the rim of the second coupler member is about 0.107 to 0.112 inches (about 2.72 to 2.84 mm).

9. (Currently amended) The friction system as claimed in claim 6, wherein the height of the stem of the first coupler member is about 0.07 to 0.09 inches (about 2.24 to 3.98 mm), the distance between the enlarged section and a free end of the stem is about 0.02 to 0.03 inches (about 0.51 to 0.76 mm), and the height of the rim of the second coupler member is about 0.04 to 0.07 inches (about 1.02 to 1.78 mm).

10. (Currently amended) The friction system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the diameter of the stem of the first coupler member is about 0.095 to 0.105 inches (about 2.41 to 2.67 mm), the diameter of the enlarged section is about 0.12 to 0.13 inches (about 3.05 to 3.30 mm), and the diameter of a [the] tubular section of the rim of the second coupler member is about 0.107 to 0.112 inches (about 2.72 to 2.84 mm).

11. (Currently amended) A backing plate for use in a friction assembly for a brake, the friction assembly **[having] comprising** a brake pad **which includes [including]** the backing plate and a friction material, the backing plate comprising:

a friction supporting surface for supporting the friction material for producing friction when the brake is in use;

a back surface opposite to the friction supporting surface, the back surface being adapted to receive a noise damping shim; and

a first coupler member formed on the back surface for engaging with a second coupler member formed on the noise damping shim to couple the noise damping shim with the backing plate.

12. (Currently amended) The backing plate as claimed in claim 11, wherein the first coupler member has a stem that is received in a hole defined by the second coupler member.

13. (Currently amended) The backing plate as claimed in claim 12, wherein the first coupler member further has a recess surrounding the stem to accept a rim defining the hole of the second coupler member.

14. (Currently amended) The backing plate as claimed in claim 13, wherein the stem of the first coupler member has an enlarged section having a larger cross section adjacent to ~~the~~ a distal end of the stem such that the enlarged section of the stem of the first coupling member mates with a larger section of the hole of the second coupler member to prevent disengagement of the shim from the backing plate.

15. (Currently amended) The backing plate as claimed in claim 14, wherein the stem of the first coupler member is deformed to form ~~to have~~ the enlarged section.

16. (Currently amended) The backing plate as claimed in claim 14, wherein the enlarged section of the stem of the first coupler member is pre-formed on the stem.

17. (Currently amended) A method of assembling a friction system for a brake, ~~the friction system including a backing~~ the method comprising the steps of:

providing a first coupler member on a back surface of a friction assembly, the friction assembly having:

a friction pad for producing friction when the brake is in use; and

a backing plate having a friction supporting surface for supporting the friction pad and a back surface opposite to the friction supporting surface, the first coupler member located on the back surface of the backing plate;

providing a second coupler member on a noise damping shim having a first surface adapted for engagement with the back surface of the backing plate, and a second surface adapted for receiving a compression force when the brake is in use;

coupling the second coupler member provided on the noise damping shim with the first coupler member provided on the back surface of the backing plate so as to couple the shim with the backing plate.

18. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the coupling step couples the first coupler member and the second coupler member by as a rivet.

19. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein:

the step for providing the first coupler member provides a stem on the back surface of the backing plate; and

the step for providing the second coupler member provides a rim defining a hole for accepting the stem of the first coupler member; and

the coupling step comprises the steps of:

mating the first coupler member with the second coupler member so that [as-to] the stem of the first coupler member is accepted in the hole of the second coupler member; and deforming the stem to secure the first coupler member with the second coupler member.

20. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the coupling step couples the first coupler member and the second coupler member by a snapping-in action.

21. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 20, wherein:

the step for providing the first coupler member provides a stem on the back surface of the backing plate, the stem having an enlarged section adjacent to a free end of the stem; and

the step for providing the second coupler member provides a rim defining a hole for accepting the stem of the first coupler member; and

the coupling step snaps the stem of the first coupler member into the hole of the second coupler member so that the enlarged section of the stem of the first coupler member secures the coupling between the first coupler member and the second coupler member.

**Amendments to the Drawings**

The attached drawing sheet, comprising amended Figure 6, is submitted as a proposed replacement sheet for Figure 6 as originally filed. Figure 6 has been amended by the insertion of reference numeral 90 to point out the first coupler element illustrated on the right side of the Figure. Support for the amendment is provided by the specification as originally filed at page 6, line 27 - page 7, line 6.

Favorable consideration for the replacement Figure is requested.

Attachments: Proposed replacement Figure 6